DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 343 472 HE 025 335

AUTHOR Bjorklund, Stefan
TITLE Leadership and Accountability in the Republic of Scholars. Studies of Higher Education and Research.
REPORT NO ISSN-0283-7692
PUB DATE 92
NOTE 22p.
AVAILABLE FROM Council for Studies of Higher Education, P.O. Box 45 501, S-104 30 Stockholm, Sweden.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Accountability; Educational Change; Educational Finance; Educational Legislation; Federal Legislation; Foreign Countries; Governance; *Government Role; Government School Relationship; *Higher Education; Leadership; *Politics of Education; School Business Relationship
IDENTIFIERS *Sweden

ABSTRACT

This essay explores issues of higher education leadership, accountability and relationship with outside influences in a critique of recently proposed Swedish legislation on higher education. The paper hypothesizes that the ideal is a body of professionals as independent and responsible through their own internal professional norms. The paper argues that accountability and strong internal leadership affect the governing of academia and therefore its operating norms and basic activities. The essay opens with a discussion of the relationship between the Swedish government and that country's higher education system since the late 1960s and the recently proposed legislation. It goes on to explore the relationship between funding and the internal life of higher education institutions in part through studies of various higher education institutions in other nations. A following section discusses proposed changes in the current direction through syllabuses. The role of external interests in Swedish higher education is examined as well as the theoretical basis for developing a policy on this issue. A brief discussion of market forces in Swedish higher education leads into a longer discussion of evaluation, result-oriented management, efficiency and decentralization, and key elements of the current legislation proposed for the reform of Swedish higher education. (JB)

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ISSN 0283-7692

Studies of Higher Education and Research

A newsletter from the Council for Studies of Higher Education. Appointed by the Chancellor of the Swedish Universities.
Address: P.O.Box 45 501, S-104 30 Stockholm, Sweden. Fax: 8-728 38 90.

ED343472

Editor: Thorsten Nybom

1992:1

LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE REPUBLIC OF SCHOLARS

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HE 025 335

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*Leadership and Accountability in The Republic of Scholars**

Stefan Björklund

Governing and teaching

From the last years of the sixties and some ten years on the Swedish higher education system was thoroughly investigated by Government commissions. The reform work was terminated by a *Riksdag* decision in 1975,[1)] and was followed by another ten years when the system was said to be in need of quiet working conditions(*arbetsro*). The Minister of Education characterized the reform as 'decentralization' and that characterization was repeated in numerous subsequent bills. The changes taking place during this time are mostly conceived as modifications of the reform.[2)] In 1990, however, an important part of the reform was rejected by the Government. Seen in the perspective of that event the modifications in the past decade should perhaps rather be called a controlled retreat.

'Rejection' is of course a strong word. Still, considering the traditionally clear and concise but somewhat euphemistical language of government bills, I think the expression is justified. The reform, the Minister says, 'took its point of departure from the needs of society and working life'. It combined this with a high academic standard and now stands out as one of the most modern 'planning philosophies' in Europe. However - and now the commemoration is over - that philosophy has brought about an extensive administrative work, too much of detailed governance, and a structure of courses and programmes that has sometimes lead to superficiality.[3)]

Closely related to the part of the reform mentioned in the last paragraph is the participation of public and working life representatives in boards and committees. I will come back to that. But I am certainly not going to suggest that the reform is completely done with. There are no reversals of grand reforms. Important parts of the reform have, although critized in some quarters, not so far been officially questioned, i.e. the regional higher education institutions and the unitary system. There is no questioning that each institution, be it in the most remote parts of the country, should offer an education of equivalent quality. 'Unitary' means that all post-secondary education is contained in one system, the unifying principle being the stipulation that all courses and programmes shall 'build on a scholarly (*vetenskaplig*) basis'.[4)] I have discussed that stipulation elsewhere;[5)] this and other aspects of the reform are left out of this essay.[6)]

The part of the 1990 Bill we are now scrutinizing is remarcable in two ways. One is the 'rejection' just mentioned. The second demands, perhaps, another reading to be disco-

vered. I am thinking of the Minister's assumption of a definite relation between the method of governance and the content of courses and programmes. The assumptions sound reasonable enough at first hearing but one soon becomes aware how little we in fact know of the long and complicated chain between decisions of Government and Parliament and the on-goings in lecture rooms and laboratories and, not least, at examinations. I am certainly not trying to put any blame on the Minister for making weak assumptions; such are the conditions of political decision-making. And I am not suggesting that I am able to deliver anything more reliable. I maintain that a chain, or rather a web, of political, social, and psychological interrelations like this one will never come near transparence. Yet there are some benefits to be had in a clarifiation of the main components of the web.

As a political scientist my main interest is the forms of governing higher education institutions, and, more specifically, the effects of governing on the content of teaching.[7)] When discussing the effects of external influences one often take it for granted that all disciplines are affected in the same way. Furthermore, the discussion usually focuses on research, not on teaching. The useful concept of 'epistemic drift' applies to research.[8)] There are good reasons to suspect that some disciplines are more vulnerable than others. A firm theoretical core, a basis of hard data, a language inaccessible to outsiders are all factors working towards immunity.[9)] Disciplines at the other side of the scale sometimes might find protection in their lack of instrumental value.[10)]

Typically the 'unprotected' disciplines diffuse their findings through teaching, not through direct communication with relevant sectors of the society. The Law decrees that all higher education should be founded on a scholarly basis. But at least for some disciplines it also works in the other direction: research is founded on teaching. Therefore I take it for granted in this essay that a lot of things said about the conditions of research also applies to teaching. But I admit that this assumption is not without complications and that it ought to be better investigated.

Funding and internal life

The power of the Government to direct the activities of higher education institutions can principally take two main forms. It could be said that what is of interest is always the result of the activities. And it is true that the directing may take the form of stipulating what should be the end result. But it is a fact that the classical way of directing higher education has been to regulate the process, the supposition being that a wise regulation of the process will achieve the desired results.

It has not always been noticed that regulation of the process, in its turn, also can take two different forms; First, regulating how things should be done, and second, regulating who should have the power to do things. I will call the second form of regulation 'constitutional' and my message in this essay is to warn people who welcome deregulation as an increase of autonomy, that a constitutional deregulation may not be unproblematic.

A report from OECD, prepared for a conference in Barcelona 1989, distinguishes between four different ways to organize higher education institutions: collegial, political, bureaucratic and the market. The hypothesis is that the organization variable is dependent on the form of funding. The report sees five forms of funding: independent sources of income from property or investment, a general grant from the government without any regulations attached, government funding subject to regulation, funding from several public agencies, and, finally, selling of services like a commercial enterprise.[11)]

There is no doubt that the hypothesis is fruitful. However, when discussing the hypothesis it is necessary to make some modifications of the typology. To begin with, I do not see the point of making a difference between the first two funding forms, if the second is not connected with at demand on the institutions of what to deliver.

The method of testing a typology consists in disentangling the different dimensions woven together in it. It is easily seen that a dimension 'one' or 'several' sources of funding is central in this typology. The degrees of independence in relation to external interests could be expected to vary within both of these two values of the 'source-' dimension. Dependence might take two forms, viz. direct regulation of the activities of the institution and 'contract', i.e. the funding tied to a performance that is defined beforehand and controlled afterwards. Contract means that no direct interference in the way the institution fulfils its undertaking is at hand. As these two forms seem to be mutually exclusive, we get one dimension with three values on an ordinal scale (see below p 4).

A Swedish reader associates 'political' with those among the directors appointed to represent the public interest. But notice that the four forms apply to the internal organization of the institution, not to the selection of power-wielders. The 'political' is best contrasted with 'collegial', which term the report uses for a self-governing community of scholars arriving at consensus. In the 'political' the scholars organize themselves in different interest groups, competing for control of resources.

I want to modify these two concepts as follows. Consensus in social life is seldom to be found from the beginning, and if it is, there is obviously no scarcity and thus no need for

any organization. What makes difference is the way in which consensus is reached: through argument or through a majority of interests defeating a minority.[12] But does not a situation of scarcity necessarily lead to conflict of interests and is not 'collegial' a romantic dream? Is OECD not unrealistic when in another report it says that 'Collegial government, the initiation of action within units and departments ... reflect the essential character of universities' academic mission and purpose'?[13] Well, interests can be kept in check by a constitution. A constitution is a form of regulation which distributes rights and duties among actors and functions as a restriction on possible outcomes in contests between them.[14] 'Constitution' is thus a check on 'politics' and the antithesis of 'anarchy' as defined below. This observation connects 'collegial' to either one, no control, source (with regulations attached) or, possibly, to several, no contract, no regulation, sources. The possibility hinges on the parties being able to connect directly with the external sources.

The typology does not use 'bureaucratic' in the common pejorative meaning but means an organization kept in good order through control from the top and that is exactly the strong leadership idea lately found in so many Swedish bills. Those bills want to enable the institutional leadership to keep the organization under control also in a situation with several, 'contract' sources, that is in a market situation. The report, however, maintains that in many countries one can see a tendency of higher education institutions falling apart when departments independently look for attractive contracts. The report calls this falling apart 'market', which in my opinion is not well chosen. As the market is what surrounds the institution, not what goes on inside it, I prefer the term 'anarchy'. The term 'market' has no place in my reformed typology. But the observant reader will notice that dependence on several sources through contract comes close to that phenomenon. As Guy Neave and others have seen there is a likely relation between outer market and inner bureaucracy.[15] My modifications of the OECD typology summarized in the following diagram (admittedly, this is only an outline that gives the structure of the argument, not its content).

The relation between funding and organization of higher education institutions

	one source	several sources
independence	political	political collegial
dependence through regulation	collegial	bureaucratic collegial
dependence through contract	bureaucratic	bureaucratic anarchical

Now, my aim has not been just to offer some terminological exercise. I want to make an addition to the hypothesis which moves a step further into the internal life of institutions. Arguments as contrasted to power is a fundamental norm of that life and some forms of organization are damaging to the norm. It can be safeguarded only through a constitution giving a definite amount of autonomy, not only to institutions, but also to disciplines and to individual scholars as well. More autonomy for institutions does not automatically produce more autonomy for its parts.

Richard Whitley has given a good description of the social mechanisms at work in a scientific community. The striving for orginality, for producing new and unexpected insights, makes for fragmentation of the community, Whitley says.[16] But the need to win the approval of colleagues integrates and forces the researcher to adhere to procedural norms. Furthermore, reputation means more than the formal place in the organization and is, at the same time, unstable. Therefore it must be continually defended through new efforts.

A situation where the researchers do not need to take one another into consideration but can be successful by appealing to other groups, is coincident with what I have called 'anarchy' and means that the critical norms which keep orginality within fruitful constraints tend to be ineffective. And the same goes for 'bureaucracy', i.e. a situation where work is organized in a formal hierarchy and where position means more than reputation.

Emphasizing the intrinsic values of reputation-seeking and quality control through peer group judgement Tony Becher argues that the 'ideals of academic communities are intimately bound up with the nature of knowledge they pursue'.[17] If that is true not just the internal life of higher education institutions but the content of knowledge is at stake.

Academic activities go on in two separate settings. One is the institution, the other the discipline.[18] Discipline means that intellectual norms, responsibilities and identities cross the boundaries of the institutional organization, and national boundaries as well. The point of intersection is at the departmental level. A stronger emphasis on the management of the institutions as a whole may mean a weakening of the disciplinary ties.[19] While the disciplinary norms are important for maintaining quality the departmental and the individual level must have some measure of independence in relation to institutional leadership. It is the task of the constitution of the institution to demarcate that independence.

Sir Karl Popper has argued that objectivity is not achieved through the individual scholar's moral efforts. It is a social, not an individual phenomenon.[20] What guarantees objectivity - and one want to add: quality in general - is an interactive process where arguments reign and criticism is encouraged. This situation is not inevitable. Critical arguments can be bothersome and it may be tempting for unsuccessful scholars to withdraw into intellectual exile. There are philosophies to be found which seem to make such moves respectable.[21] But society can not be expected to let such things happen. The idea of constitution is to give every member of the republic of scholars 'voice' and prohibit 'exit' (with preserved status of 'scholar').

Directing through syllabuses

Before 1977 teaching in the faculties having free admission was directed through two annual allocations of teaching hours to the department. The decision was taken by the NBUC(National Board of Universities and Colleges). Including as it did for each level the number of *professor*, *lektor* and *adjunkt* hours, respectively, and also the time allotted for examinations, it was in one respect a very detailed control. But it did little to affect the content of the study programmes. With the reform the control of teachers' teaching hours disappeared and instead directions via syllabuses confirmed by the NBUC was introduced.

The study programme syllabuses stated the profession or field of activities the programme was intended for, the knowledge required for admission and quantitative limits for different items. The last information was more imperative at the beginning of the period but as time went on the syllabuses tended to be more lax. That meant that more was left for the locally decided syllabuses; 'locally' here means the middle level. The last piece of information for a syllabus to be complete was the list of required literature, which, but for some exceptions in the beginning, was left to the departments, which in turn often leave the task to the teacher.

For the last two of these three levels, central, local middle level and departmental, one can ask the following question: how far did the decisions of the higher levels restrict its freedom of action? And for all three of them: who were the actors with influence over the decisions? And were there any typical conflicts between them?

For the highest level of the content hierarchy, the stating of the profession or field of activities, no conflict should be expected, the stating being so general that it constituted very little of constraint for the following levels. Things were otherwise on the next level, the choosing of items and their relative strength within the programme. This was, for

example, evident when the new study programmes for the *AES*-sector (*AES* standing for 'administrative, economic, and social') were prepared. Decision lay, as mentioned, at the central level but representatives of the involved disciplines took an active part in the preparations. Contacts between teachers in different disciplines before the reform were very rare, even between related disciplines, and a change in that behaviour is anyway one lasting, positive effect of the reform.

In line with the spirit of the Reform even representatives of the working life participated but the conflicts were between representatives of disciplines. Competing disciplines could with various success seek support from working life interests and what we see is a kind of conflict between 'internal' parties where no internal criteria are at hand. What kind of internal criterium could, for example, possibly decide how much of political science is necessary in the 'local government administration' programme?

The changes now announced in government bills mean that the control of the content of the programmes (with some exceptions) will be totally decentralized. How will conflicts like the one just mentioned then be solved? Researchers seem to be unanimous that committees controlled by faculty are not especially good at solving conflicts between disciplines. Dead-locks are very probable outcomes. And at the same time Government and Parliament give up some of the control over the constitution of higher education institutions.

Autonomy and external interests

The essence of the educational mission of a higher education institution is to (1) admit individuals to, (2) in an assigned length of time, (3) be taught a certain measure of knowledge and skills. A Government could be expected to be concerned of all three aspects of the mission.

Admission has been, and still is -at least until 1993, mainly handled by the NBUC but institutions have wanted and will now be granted the power to construct their own application rules. Still, this does not mean very much for the system as a totality, since the total number of per-sons to be admitted has not been controversial and therefore the population of would-be students will be the same as before.

Even the long Swedish study programmes are often short, three to four years, compared with most other European countries but no strong claims of prolongation have been heard. Anyway, few deny that this issue legitimately has to be decided outside the institutions.

The third aspect of the essence of the educational mission involves the search for and evaluation of new knowledge and the critique and maintenance of old.

The concept of 'autonomy' is mostly applied to research. What is meant is a freedom to look for new knowledge wherever it is to be found, uninhibited by external interests.[22] But the concept could just as well be applied to teaching. This can be said on general grounds and the claim is even stronger after taking into consideration what the Law says about the research connection of teaching.

Every branch of knowledge, at least every branch of knowledge which is the object of higher education, has a more or less firm structure that puts different pieces of knowledge in their proper place and regulates what is central and what is marginal. The structure is partly determined by that which the knowledge is knowledge of, partly by tradition. The criteria one deduces from this structure are called 'professional' and the idea of autonomy is to let professional criteria decide.

External criteria are everything else. They may for example come from objectives to use higher education to increase social equality or to stimulate regional development. Since my focus is on what is taught and learnt in lecture rooms and laboratories, the dominating external criteria originate in working life.

From the heated debate of the question of external representation on the board of directors one could easily be led to the conclusion that this is where the real threat to autonomy is to be found. I disagree.

One aim of the 1977 reform was to give the public interest and working life interests a say in the decision making. Representatives of the public interest took their place among the directors and was to begin with elected by political bodies in county councils and municipalities (formally they were appointed by the Government). This order was very much contested although it, at the same time, was testified by vice chancellors and other well-placed persons that the external representatives rather did see themselves as 'internal' and behaved like devoted defenders of the institution's interests. However, this order was changed some years ago. Political nominees were no longer the obvious upholders of the public interest. Also people from industry, trade and culture might be recruited.[23] And, perhaps more important, it is now given to the institution to nominate candidates for the board of directors. Who but the vice chancellor could inform the government of the institution's will? He, and in some few cases she, has no doubt an interest to surround him- or herself with persons of excellent standing, but who could expect

him/her to dress the board with people of dissenting ideas? Although this rather odd arrangement has not sprung from the wish to have stronger leaders it fits well into the overall picture

In the boards at the middle level employees' and employers' associations are represented and expected to express the viewpoints of working life. There is no systematic investigation of their influence on the content of study programmes. But some reports indicate that it was bigger at the beginning when many programmes were new. According to some observations they even went as far as to have opinions on individual books.

When discussing the influence of working life representatives the following points ought to be kept in mind. Although teachers can be expected to bring forward mainly internal viewpoints, 'internal' was not defined as anything teachers go in for. Evidently, teachers often have good reasons to pay attention to external factors,[24] especially when different disciplines compete for space in a programme. There are no internal criteria for solving such conflicts. And, inversely, external people can be as eager as teachers to defend internal values. They themselves have often studied and feel involved in the relevant disciplines. And it should also be noticed that it is often difficult to articulate the demands of working life and that the only criteria at hand sometimes tend to be internal.[25] The apprehension for a conflict between labour market demands and traditional academic values is thus not borne out by what is known of the internal work of the study programme committees. It is also not confirmed by a recent book by Chris Boys *et al.*, *Higher education and preparation for work*. The book is a close study of how six different disciplines, from history to electrical engineering, have responded to labour market demands and the effects on academic values. In the concluding chapter Maurice Kogan says 'departments should be encouraged to remain true to the quality demands of their areas ... There is shown to be no conflict between strong disciplinary formation and an ability to prepare effective graduates for the labour market'.[26]

My conclusion is that the participation of external representatives in the Directing Boards has been very over-dramatized.[27] Far from being a threat to academic values I can see for them a role as mediators when different academic values compete. Autonomy is not the same as closure. External participation is a means to higher education institutions that are both open and autonomous. That, however, is not the trend. The external representatives are loosing ground. At the beginning they participated as legitimate shareholders in the enterprise, but from now on they should rather be seen as consultants engaged by the institutions. Only a constitution can reverse that trend and guarantee a meaningful participation.

Market

I have suggested that the term 'market' should be reserved for designating a possible way to arrange the milieu in which institutions live. Of the three forms of institutions discussed by Burton Clark, consumer, labour and institutional,[28] only the last has been topical in the Swedish context. In a Bill 1985 the Government introduced the idea of institutions selling their services to firms and organizations.[29] It is interesting to note that one was anxious to prohibit the selling of education to individuals wanting to bypass the official admittance system, thus keeping away any element of consumer market.

Some draw-backs very soon became apparent. Attempts to increase the turnover and enlarge faculty and staff may easily lead institutions to sell their products below real costs, thus draining off good teachers and other resources from the government-funded part. Protests from students have had effect,[30] and for the moment everybody seem to be content to keep this kind of activity on the present level.[31]

Evaluation and result-oriented management

One can discern four different ways of forcing higher education institutions to conform to 'societal' demands. One is direct governmental regulation, through Laws and Ordinances or through stipulations connected to funding. External representatives in governing boards on different levels could be seen as another, indirect way to outside control. The third way is the market. I have made some comments on each of these in the preceding sections. My claims were that the first is very much abandoned, the second overrated, and the third not so much talked about for the moment.[32] The fourth, now currently discussed, way is related to the concepts of 'evaluation' and 'results-oriented management'.

Now, these two concepts are not necessarily connected. Evaluation through peer review could very well be seen as a constitutional device for maintaining the fundamental norm of free and interinstitutional criticism. It is certainly the business of Government to make sure that the academia does not relax in its critical alertness. The scepticism is more wide-spread when it comes to quantitative performance indicators.[33] However, in contrast to what is usually assumed, the crucial question is not the validity of different performance indicators but the application of the information in governmental policy.

Nothing much is said about that in bills. But it is foreshadowed that the institution as a whole will be kept responsible for unsatisfying performance and that the evaluation results will form the basis for funding decisions; this is the obvious meaning of the term

'results-oriented management'. For such a responsibility to be reasonable the leaders of the institutions must be given a definite amount of intra-institutional power.

The rational link between measurement of results and policy is the stating of objectives. No doubt some objectives can be stated in an operationally feasible way, e.g. the output of graduated students. But the problem is that objectives concerning the content of teaching and research are continually developed within that activity. Any stating of objectives which is not very abstract, therefore is doomed to be *post factum*.[34)]

Efficiency, decentralization and leadership

In official parlance the higher education system is regularly treated as another branch of the governmental administrative system. From a sociological point of view this, of course, is far from the whole truth. The university is a social institution formed by a long historical process and some aspects of that institution are well entrenched in the general value system of our society. It is, to take the most obvious example, inconceivable that a responsible politician says anything against the 'autonomy' of research. This sets limits to what a government in a short or medium-range perspective can do to the internal life of the university. However, formally, it is the Government and Parliament who give to the institution the constitution without which no inner life would exist. You find the constitution in *Högskolelagen* (given by the *Riksdag*) and the more detailed *Högskoleförordningen* (issued by the Government).

In a publicly funded education system a minimal official constitution is unavoidable - one needs at least an address to which to send the money. But apart from that there is room for every degree of regulation from a situation where one leaves to the governing board to specify the internal rules and a situation where law and ordinance in great detail prescribe what committees shall exist and their competence.

In fact the constitution given in the Swedish Law and Ordinance affects all levels of the higher education institution, from the board of directors to the individual faculty member (what the Ordinance says about qualifications and rules governing appointments ought to be seen as a part of the constitution).

The development since 1977 has been in the direction of less regulation. For example, formerly the Law stipulated separate governing bodies for research and teaching on the middle (faculty) level.[35)] Now it is possible to combine both in one, single Faculty board (*fakultetsstyrelse*). The overall vertical structure is, however, still the same, with four levels: board of directors and vice chancellor, faculty governing board and dean, depart-

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ment and prefect and the individual teacher.[36] I want to stress the role of inde-pendent decision-maker given to individual faculty.

But, one may object, does this really need to be stressed? After all, in every work place some room on the shop floor is left to the individual? My point is the difference between 'delegation' and 'decentralization' on one side and 'autonomy' on the other. The first two concepts mean that a higher level in a decision-making hierarchy commit some part of its power to a lower level. In 'autonomy' there is no question of levels. The 'autonomous' body or person has in its or her own right a legitimate power over a decision-making area. As I said, you can hardly find an outright attack on academic autonomy. But it is worth noticing a growing tendency to use 'decentralization' as a synonym for 'autonomy'.[37]

In a memorandum prepared in the Ministry of Education in 1983 one can read of the need to strengthen the higher education institutions' capacity to make decisions. One proposal is to give the board of directors increased authority regarding the internal organization of the institution. At the same time the memorandum wants a more independent role for the vice chancellor, like that of a director general of an ordinary national government agency. Also the middle-level leadership ought to be strengthened. The image of a smooth organization is complete with the recommendation of better lines of communication between the board of directors and the departments.[38]

The background of the memorandum is said to be a hardening economic climate. This theme is even more conspicuous in another memorandum two years later. The main part of this memorandum is devoted to administrative development in a more technical meaning. But it also discusses the need for a 'common philosophy of management'. Such a philosophy, which is crucial for a higher degree of efficiency, should start with a long-ranging plan for the development of the enterprise and continue with specifying the instruments for steering and the responsibilities on all levels, from the central level to the different institutional levels.[39]

The aim, according to the 1985 memorandum, is to reach better results relative to the resources used. The problem for the memorandum is that, although the productivity in terms of the numbers of examinations or of research reports are easy to calculate, the products are notoriously soft. It is, the memorandum maintains, a difficult but none the less important task to find methods for evaluation of both educational and scholarly results.[40] These memoranda make it plain that increased discretionary powers to the board of directors and to the vice chancellor are not to be seen as a strenghtening of the

autonomy. On the contrary, decentralization is combined with a tighter grip on the institutions to provide measurable results.

The memorandum on institutional organization did not say much about the departments and the role of heads of departments. But already next year the Government proposed a reform of the rules governing the duties of faculty.[41] Until then duties had been expressed in terms of classes(*undervisningstimmar*) per year. Much can be said in favour of the increased flexibility intended by the Bill. As an example, the absurdity of treating one class as equivalent to any other was obvious: some lectures demand extensive preparations while other are so elementary that an experienced teacher can manage without much preparatory work. My interest in this essay, however, is another aspect of the reform. The Bill already in the first few sentences reminds us of the harsh economic situation which demands a more cost-efficient use of resources and decentralization is said to be a means for increasing efficiency.

To be sure, the good old days when a teacher lectured on anything that happened to be his current research interest was long since past when this Bill was sent to Parliament. Every teacher was accustomed to find his place in the study programme syllabus. But from now on the totality of his working hours was subordinated to the decision of the head of department. It is his decision how the working hours of the individual teacher shall be divided between different tasks: classes, preparations, planning, producing readers, examination, etc.[42]

I do not want to give the impression that the ideal is anything like an authoritarian leadership. The head of department is, and the Bill cites the Ordinance, responsible for good working conditions, which include to take the individual teacher's qualifications and interests into regard. But the Bill is also quite clear that the new order means a more pronounced leadership within departments.

Would you expect this Bill to put an end to the concept of faculty duties expressed as number of classes? No! Union influence forced the Minister to accept the inconsistency of a ceiling of classes for 'normal conditions'. But as the Bill gives no definition, 'normal' has tended to be the same as 'traditional' and things are left very much as they were. Some may see this as gratifying: the management philosophy came to a halt when confronted with the autonomy of the individual teacher. I for my part prefer another interpretation. Autonomy is not the same as self-sufficiency. The teachers much more than is now usually the case, ought to take part in a discourse where the discipline and its didactic is continually examined by a community of colleagues. That is, as I see it, a

mini-constitutional issue. The head of department has an important task in creating and maintaining such a community but that task is not easily accomodated with a philosophy that sees him as a foreman.[43)]

Many decisions on the local level are connected with scholarly judgments. Therefore the autonomy of the institution can not just mean autonomy of its board of directors and the vice chancellor but must also to a great extent include the autonomy of all levels within the institution. Government and Parliament has a comprehensive responsibility for activity being organized to satisfy high quality demands.[44)]

These words from a Bill 1988 points in the direction of governance through constitutional devices. But, as this essay has indicated, the general trend is quite another. It consists of three elements. First, a decentralization of decision making powers to the institutions. Secondly, a demand on institutions to produce quantatively measurable results. And thirdly, a strong leadership within institutions in order to secure efficient management. The first element is already realized. The second and the third are, as Robert Cowen says, 'reciprocal. Evaluation requires management and management requires evaluation'.[45)] It is still not clear how tightly productivity will be controlled. It depends both on intentions and on the creation of reliable methods. But one thing is clear. A strong demand on the vice chancellor to account for the output of his institution diminishes the scope of autonomy within the institution.

The autonomy of the individual teacher is safeguarded through four principles: appointment under public control, tenure, some minimal resources for research and voice in the affairs of the institution. For a manager under pressure to deliver this principles are impediments to productivity. And he is right - that is, if productivity is given a narrow interpretation. However, if productivity is defined broadly enough to include quality, it can only be bought to the price of some local losses in quantitative efficiency. To reach a high overall performance one must tolerate some eccentricities on the individual level. A straitjacket of routines for quality-control will probably root out all slacks in the organization, but it will at the same time kill creativity.[46)]

The title of my essay is *Leadership and accountability in the republic of scholars*. 'Republic' here stands for the ideal of a body of professionals, independent but responsible through their professional norms. Such a body has no formal responsibility towards any external actor. Responsibility manifests itself through internal rules. My hypothesis is that accountability and the adjoining strong leadership affects not only the republic as a form of government but also its operating norms and through that the basic activities.

'Autonomy' and 'decentralization' are often treated as synonyms but belong to very different contexts.[47] Decentralization does not in itself strengthen the republic, rather, in connection with accountability it is a threat to the republic.[48]

NOTES

* As a part of the preparations for an OECD examination of Swedish education policies the Ministry of Education has invited four scholars to write essays. This is one of them. My work is supported by the Council for Studies of Higher Education.

1) *Lindensjö 1981*

2) See f.e. *Regeringens prop 88/89:65*, p 3. The 80s as a time of moderate changes seems to be an international tendency; see *Teichler 1988a*, p 169

3) *Regeringens prop. 1990/91:150, Bil II:7.* Since 1977 mainly Moderaterna(The Conservative Party) and Folkpartiet(The Liberals) have criticized different aspects of the reform, but the 1990 Bill is written by a Social democratic Minister of Education. For an outside, and much more positive, view of the "line" system, see *Scott 1991*, p 9

4) *Björklund 1991a.*

5) The term 'vetenskaplig' is the equivalent of the German term "Wissenschaftlich" and thus notoriously difficult to translate into English.

6) The minister of Education has recently presented a document: *Fria universitet och högskolor*, for public debate as a preparation for a new law and ordinance. Although what I am saying in this essay may not be totally irrelevant for the Minister's considerations, it has not been possible to integrate them into the discussion

7) The relation is quite obscure, see van Vught, in *van Vught 1989*, p 121

8) Elzinga, in *Premfors 1984*, p 11, pp 114

9) *Jensen 1986*, pp 54. *Whitley 1987*, p 84, pp 153. *Becher 1989*, pp 154

10) *Becher 1989*, pp 138

11) *Financing higher education*, pp 10

12) *Björklund 1991b*

13) *Universities under scrutiny*, p 14

14) For a general perspective, see Sejersted, in *Elster-Slagstad 1988*, pp 131

15) *Neave 1991*, p 22. *Cowen 1991*, p 11

16) *Whitley 1987*, pp 22 and pp 48

17) *Becher 1989*, p 169

18) *Clark 1983*, pp 28, p 159. Ruscio, in *Clark 1987*, pp 355. *Universities under scrutiny*, pp 30

19) *Becher & Kogan 1991*, p 166

20) *Popper 1945/66*, pp 217

21) If not the intent, this is at any rate the effect of radical relativism. *Björklund 1991b*

22) *Gustavsson 1971*

23) *Regeringens proposition 83/84*, pp 10

24) *Boys et al. 1988*, p 21

25) *Allen 1988*, p 82

26) *Boys et al. 1988*, p 220

27) A majority of Swedish faculty seem to have come to the same conclusion; *Lane 1990*, p 90, pp 133. See also *Premfors 1984*, p 46

28) *Clark 1983*, p 162

29) *Regeringsprop. 84/85:195*, p 12

30) *Askling 1988*, p 5

31) *Året som gick 1989/90*, p 12

32) In '*Fria universitet ...*' the market appears in the form of the idea of funding on the basis of students' preferences

33) Franke-Wikberg, in *Nybom 1989*, pp 155. However, the resistance seems to grew weaker; *Cazalis 1988*, p 26

34) *Cazalis 1988*, p 26

35) The regional university colleges have no permanent research organization, so this does not apply to them. The argument of this essay is intended to cover the whole of the higher education system, but I think that I, without doing much harm to my argument, can leave out the finer binary nuances of the unitary system.

36) Which, including the central level, makes totally five levels, not four as in *Becher & Kogan 1991*, pp 10, p 79, who incorporate both faculties and departments in the 'basic unit'

37) See f.e. *Regeringens prop 88/89:65*, p 4. and *Wallin & Lindblad 1991*, p 8 are right when stressing the connection between the concepts of 'autonomy' and 'professionalism'

38) *Högskolans institutionella organisation*, p 14, p 17, p 25, p 27 and p 33
39) *Ledning, samverkan och administrativ utveckling*, p 24
40) *Ledning, samverkan och administrativ utveckling*, p 11
41) *Regeringens prop 84/85:57*, p 5, p 8, pp 27
42) Ruin, in *Nybom 1989*, p 57 has pointed to the connection between 'marketization' and the principle of paying teachers and researchers according to achievment
43) *Kyvik et al. 1989*, p 73
44) *Regeringes prop 88/89:65*, p 4
45) *Cowen 1991*, p 11
46) A very similar line of thought has been developed by Sverker Gustavsson in *Gustavsson 1992ms*, shortly to be published
47) A deeper analysis should pay attention to Premfors' warning that autonomy is a multidimensional phenomenon. However, as long as administrative and financial dimensions of autonomy do not affect the pedagogical (in the word's widest meaning) they are of secondary interest, *Premfors 1980*, p 58.
48) This trend is not confined to Sweden, *Teichler 1988*, p 102. The changes have been most dramatic and controversial in Britain; see *Lockwood 1986* and *Scott 1986*. For a leadership success story, se Trow in *Premfors 1984*, p 148 ff

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